

TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY THE CLERK OF THE LEGISLATURE
Transcriber's Office
FLOOR DEBATE

April 13, 2006 LB 1024

have one special policy for one part of the state and a completely different policy for the rest of the state. I plan to take this amendment to a record vote so that everyone in the body will go on record. If the Legislature fails to adopt this amendment, it will be crystal clear to everyone the Legislature really does not believe that smaller districts are better. Rather, it will show that the Legislature knowing and willingly voted for state-sponsored segregation in Omaha. It saddens me greatly to have witnessed what happened last Tuesday night. I had always hoped that our children would have the opportunity to learn in diverse schools. I fear that history will not and should not judge us kindly nor will our children and our grandchildren when they realize what we have done. This Legislature and this state honors what Dr. Martin Luther King stood for every January. Dr. King said he had a dream for his four children that they would one day live in a nation where they would not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character. By approving state-sponsored segregation, it makes me wonder if we ever listened to what he said. I put this decision in your hands. A yes vote on this amendment says you believe in smaller districts are better for all students. By voting no on this amendment and yes on the Chambers amendment, you will be affirming state-sponsored racial and social segregation. Thank you for your consideration. Thank you, Mr. President.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Senator Howard. You've heard the opening on the motion to return to Select File for a specific amendment. Open for discussion. Senator Bourne, followed by Senator Chambers. Senator Bourne.

SENATOR BOURNE: Thank you, Mr. President, members. I listened to Senator Kopplin, his heartfelt comments...oh, I rise in support of the Howard amendment, by the way. I watched every member of the Education Committee struggle with this bill, and frankly, I don't think there's but one person on the floor perhaps that's happy with this end product. I know a lot of people had a lot of different reasons to vote for this. I can understand the frustration, real or perceived, by my colleagues as it relates to Omaha Public Schools, in that they feel that this is the only way that they can get Omaha Public Schools to